

European Schools Council

3 Feb 98

Representatives attending the meeting:

LTG David L. Benton III - Chief of Staff, U.S. European Command
Dr. John E. Davis - Area Superintendent, Europe
Colonel J. Michael Lynch - Deputy ECJ1, U.S. European Command
Colonel Doyle Brown - Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, U.S. Air Forces, Europe
Colonel John Richard - Deputy Director, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, U.S. Army, Europe
Captain Lynne Hanel - Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, U.S. Navy, Europe
Captain Dave Hardy - Fleet Legal Advisor, U.S. Navy, Europe
Mr. Seth Maher - Chief, Europe Service Center, DoDDS-E
Mr. David Labuhn - Chief of Staff, Area Superintendent, Europe
Mr. Andrew Zacharias - District Superintendent, UK District
Mr. Frederick Murphy - Chief, Logistics Division, DoDDS-E
Lt Col Christopher P. Livingston - Chief, Policy/Personnel Programs, U.S. European Command
CDR John Hibbard - Deputy Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, U.S. Navy, Europe
Mr. Scott Haines - Executive Secretary, U.S. European Command
Mr. William Cornell - DoDDS Representative, U.S. Air Forces, Europe
Ms. Jan Witte - DoDDS Representative, U.S. Army Europe
Mr. Wayne Hartmann - Logistics Division, DoDDS-E

Opening Remarks

LTG Benton convened the meeting at 1400 in Hq USEUCOM Headquarters Conference Room and asked the attendees to introduce themselves. LTG Benton stressed the importance of the forum to Europe. LTG Benton discussed the two separate reporting chains and the various councils in each chain. He informed the group that he is a member of the Advisory Council on Dependents Education (DoDEA ran) and ECJ1 will be attending the Dependents Education Council (Military ran).

1. LTG Benton then led a discussion on the structure of the European Schools Council.
Decisions reached:

Voting Members:

Director, ECJ1
HQ USAREUR/ODSCPER
HQ USNAVEUR/N1
HQ USAGE/DP
DoDDS-E Area Superintendent
DoDDA-E Chief, Area Service Center

Non-Voting Members:
Commander CAFES-Europe Representative
Executive Secretary SEC
Ad Hoc Members

Frequency: At least two times per year.

ACTION: Completed

2. DoDDS Dormitory Closure. With the expansion of Menwith Hill to now include grades 10-12, the number of students enrolled in our dormitories have decreased to the point that we can no longer maintain both the London Central High School (LCHS) Dormitory and the Lakenheath High School (LHS) Dormitory. The projected dormitory enrollment for SY 98-99 is 65 students. With only 65 students, a DoDDS staff reduction is required and either dormitory can accommodate this number of students. DoDDS has held yearly AD HOC dormitory meetings involving all stakeholders to discuss dormitory issues. For the past two years the stakeholders were unable to reach consensus on which dormitory to close.

Several concerns always surface while attempting to decision on this matter, they are addressed below. These concerns were also discussed at the European Schools Council (ESC).

a. Security Concerns. As discussed at the ESC, most of the security concerns stem from the name LCHS. NAVEUR personnel explained the dormitory is at Daws Hill vice central London and there has not been a threat or break in; Daws Hill is described a sleepy NATO base with no gate guards; there is a police force and the gate is routinely secured; and the dorm is isolated like a college campus.

b. LCHS academic/educational opportunities will be dramatically affected. The loss of the dorm students would result in the loss of 2.5 teachers. In order to maintain a fine academic program which is rich in AP classes as well as other options for students the dormitory needs to remain at LCHS.

c. There are 65 students projected for the dormitory next year. The bed capacity for LCHS is 162 and LHS is 72. LCHS will accommodate growth in the number of dormitory students better than LHS. We have 27 students in an international school dormitory in Rome if this should become unavailable we would require additional dormitory space. USAFE cautioned that if the LHS is closed they will convert the dormitory to unaccompanied billeting and it will difficult if not impossible to change this back to dormitory space.

d. The majority of dormitory students are from La Maddalena and St. Mawgan and their parents prefer their attendance at LCHS.

After the ESC, the Area Superintendent for DoDDS Europe has recommended to DoDEA that the Lakenheath Dormitory be closed. Dr. Gonzalez will contact LTG Benton before she implements the closure.

LTG Benton signed a memo to Dr. Davis agreeing to the closing the Lakenheath Dormitory.

ACTION: Completed

3. Framework for School Improvement Support. LTG Benton shared with the group the discussions that took place at the Advisory Council on Dependents Education concerning the plan. This program has identified schools that fall below the rest of the schools, it is important to note that these identified schools are still above the national average. DoDDS is developing a plan how to identify areas in these schools that may be contributing to the problem and develop a plan to bring these schools up to a level with the rest of the schools. He stated this is a program to help the kids. 36 different states are involved in this type of improvements programs. This program is consistent with the Community Strategic Plan. LT. Benson stated the chain of command must be supportive. He recommended that dodo personnel talk to the local commanders. Dr. Advise warned about union perception the this program is “top down” driven. Six Army communities are identified and they are high tempo combat communities.

ACTION: Completed

4. Long Term Planning. There are two issues relating to long term planning. One relates to DoDDS submitting their MILCON projects to CINCEUR for annual prioritization. DoDDS must submit their MILCON projects with enough time for CINCEUR to determine which projects should go to design allowing them to be considered in the budget process. The second issue involves keeping DoDDS informed. It is critically important that DoDDS-E be included in the planning process. Potential changes in stationing impact directly on DoDDS-E resources and schools. DoDDS recommends that they be informed of all planned and potential stationing changes by theater and component commands. They are asking for points of contact at theater and component commands who can give direction to help ensure that funds will be spent at locations where the benefit will be maximized.

ACTION:

HQ EUCOM : Work with DODDS-E and develop a timeline for annual MILCON submissions.

COMPONENTS: Provide DoDDS-E with POCs for planned and potential stationing changes.

5. Exceptional Family Member Program Weaknesses. Numerous dependents with learning and physical disabilities of DoD sponsors coming to Europe and are being assign to locations where their educational and physical disabilities cannot be adequately served. DoDDS are asking for assistance in implementing the screening and assignment process with commands with are not within the major service commands of EUCOM. Several recommendations were made at a EFMP Screening Meeting in November 97. DoDDS have asked that these recommendations be implemented. One of the recommendations were to remind the military department that 1010.13-R permits DoDEA to bill the sending military department when the screening process is not followed.

ACTION:

HQ EUCOM and Components review Working Group recommendations for possible implementation.

6. Partnership for Peace Students update. Lt Col Livingston updated the group on the PFP students that are attending Brussels High School and the International School in SHAPE. The waiver to allow these students to attend these schools on a tuition-free, space-available basis expires at the end of SY 97-98. The Asst Sec of Def (Force Management Policy) has indicated another waiver will not be granted. This action is currently being staffed by the Deputy Asst Sec (Personnel Support, Families and Education) is working with OSD General Counsel and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. Once OSD has developed their final position we will send a request from CINCEUR to OSD requesting a permanent solution.

ACTION: Completed

7. The group then discussed the relationship between the European Schools Council and the Tri-Service Council. The DoDDS representatives had previously made a recommendation that the European Schools Council be added to the Tri-Service Council. The group agreed the European Schools Council would be structured as in paragraph 1 above and any issues that could not be resolved would be brought to the attention of the **Executive Education Council**, which would meet in conjunction with the Tri-Service Council and that LTG Benton would chair this council and the Deputy Commanders would be voting members for the Component Commands.

ACTION: HQ EUCOM prepare memorandum for LTG Benton's signature requesting the Executive Education Council be added to the Tri-Service Council.

8. Match training holidays with inservice days when possible. Components provide their published training holidays to ECJ1 and ECJ1 will provide these training holidays to DoDDS-E asking them to match their inservice days with the military training holidays as much as possible.

ACTION: Components submit training holidays to HQ EUCOM/ECJ1.

9. Substance Abuse Counselors. USAFE has a need for substance abuse counselors in their DoDDS schools. Two USAFE bases were previously covered under a USAREUR contract but are no longer covered because of funding reductions. USAFE is unable to identify alternate funding sources and have asked DoDDS to pickup the funding. DoDDS says their not in a position to fund. USAREUR will investigate the source of their funding, will check with DA to see if the funding is from Anti-Drug funding. USNAVEUR will check the source of their funds to see if the funding is from Drug Demand Reduction Funds. Once the source of the funds are identified the hope is that USAFE can go to the Air Staff and get similar funds.

ACTION: USAREUR and USNAVEUR check the source of the funding for the Substance Abuse Counselors and provide results to USAFE and HQ EUCOM.

10. DoDDS Personnel Plan. USAFE is concerned with the aging teacher force and what impact it will have on the school system. The drawdown resulted in significantly fewer teacher positions available to be filled by spouses accompanying sponsors to Europe. Retirements of career teachers promises to provide increased employment opportunities for spouses. Dr. Davis explained DoDEA personnel system protects the “more veteran” teacher. Family members are given 1st preference after current employees and personnel with veterans preference. DoDDS has hired more family members this year than last year. DoDDS is aware of the aging teacher force and have an applicant pool of qualified personnel ready for employment.

ACTION: Completed

11. Support for Small Installations. USAFE is concerned that drawdown and stationing decisions have resulted in installations which have no DoDDS school or very small schools which are at risk of being closed because of high per pupil costs. They are asking that DoDDS review education support for small installations and attempt to provide alternatives other than home schooling or attendance at host schools. DoDDS has indicated their intent to close Messtetten Annex (classroom) to Böblingen and HQ USAFE has responded that the closure is not appropriate at this time. Messtetten is a 36 months accompanied and 24 months unaccompanied tour. While the current enrollment is small (3 students), it will increase to approximately 12 during the coming school year. Since transportation time to other DoDDS schools is excessive, DoDDS should continue to provide on-site instruction as long as the tour length remains unchanged and there are dependent children requiring education. After careful consideration of the alternatives, we support USAFE’s position not to close Messtetten Annex at this time. The only option available is correspondence courses. DoDD 1342.13 states that DoD dependent students may be provided education in approved non-DoD dependents schools or may receive correspondence courses at U.S. Government expense only at locations where DoD dependents schools are not available or are operating at maximum capacity. Although there is precedence for correspondence courses and there are students in Europe participating in this program, teaching instruction is our desired goal.

ACTION: When DoDDS-E is considering closing down a small school, provide alternatives to correspondence courses.

12. Improved Communications through Technology. USAFE believes that technology offers many opportunities to improve communications between school authorities and the public it serves. Proposed initiatives include electronic re-registration, e-mail for newsletter, absentee reporting, and scheduling parent/teacher conferences, and electronic solicitation of IAC/SAC agenda items and distribution of results of such meetings and to keep parents informed and to encourage attendance. USAFE asks that the ESC endorses this concept and propose it be further discussed at the Dependents Education Council.

ACTION: DoDDS-E investigate improved communications through technology.

13. Zero Tolerance for Alcohol, Drugs and Weapons. Goal 6 of the DoDEA Community Strategic Plan states that they will provide Safe, Disciplined, and Alcohol and Drug-Free Schools. DoDDS indicate a sensing from several communities of the emergence of gang-like activity by students. DoDDS ask that communities and schools mount an awareness campaign for students, parents and staff; Commanders restrict or delay granting command sponsorship to extended family members; and Commanders provide support to school authorities during suspension and expulsion proceedings.

ACTION: Military DoDDS representatives determine the most effective way to mount an awareness campaign.

14. Logistical Base Support for Local Schools. As a result of the drawdown of U.S. military forces in the European theater, DoDDS has experienced a significant decrease in the quality and timeliness of critical support services. To compensate for the loss of support and to maintain the quality of educational programs, DoDDS began to rely on Total Maintenance Contracts (TMC) at certain locations to maintain school facilities. The TMC arrangement is somewhat more expensive than public works/base civil engineer support; but, the quality, timeliness and volume of support is better.

ACTION: DoDDS-E and Component Commands determine the most economical means to provide these services to DoDDS.

15. Recommend the next European Schools Council be held September approximately one month after school begins next year.

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